



Split, © Marla Panko

Split – in so many ways

by Michael Stacey

That morning I received the message we all dread
my mum was not well
only days left to live

My heart was split into pieces
by grief

While my mind struggled with a split of a different kind
between sadness in seeing her go
and pride in the life she had lived

With that strong will to always speak her mind
to express openly her views on life
not pandering to political correctness

That same day I attended a smudge ceremony
for truth and reconciliation
for the lost children and survivors
split from their families into residential schools

As I placed my tobacco into the embers
I said prayers for those lost children
and for my mum who soon we would lose

While the singers beat on their drums
an eagle drifted on currents overhead

preparing to deliver these invocations
to the creator above

In a reverie I recalled the debates with my mum
when our opinions were split over topics
of philosophy, politics and social justice
and others somewhat inane - daylight savings

When she grew weaker and weaker
my feelings split further and further
wishing her to stay
while willing that she find her rest

Finally, today
the same day as her sister
seven years before

She found her right time
and welcomed the creator
who gently embraced her
and whisked her away

Making permanent our split
in this life

Leaving intact our spiritual union
that cannot be split